

Members

Rep. Charlie Brown, Chairperson
Rep. Dan Stevenson
Rep. Scott Pelath
Rep. Ralph Ayres
Rep. Timothy Fesko
Rep. Dean Mock
Sen. Ron Alting
Sen. Sue Landske, Vice-Chairperson
Sen. Joseph Zakas
Sen. Earline Rogers
Sen. William Alexa
Sen. Rose Ann Antich
Mayor Duane Dedelow
Mayor James Perron



NORTHWEST INDIANA TRANSPORTATION STUDY COMMISSION

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Authority: P.L.241-1997

MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: September 30, 1999
Meeting Time: 1:00 P.M.
Meeting Place: Center for Visual and Performing Arts
Meeting City: Munster, Indiana
Meeting Number: 2

Members Present: Rep. Charlie Brown, Chairperson; Dan Stevenson; Rep. Scott Pelath; Rep. Timothy Fesko; Rep. Dean Mock; Sen. Sue Landske, Vice-Chairperson; Sen. Joseph Zakas; Sen. Earline Rogers; Sen. William Alexa; Sen. Rose Ann Antich.

Members Absent: Rep. Ralph Ayres; Sen. Ron Alting; Mayor Duane Dedelow; Mayor James Perron.

Chairman Rep. Charlie Brown called the meeting to order, and asked the members of the Commission to introduce themselves. Rep. Brown announced that the first order of business for the meeting would be the issue of Michigan trains.

Rep. Brown asked Jim Poe of the Indiana Department of Revenue, Motor Carrier Division, (INDOR-MCD) about the options for correcting the calendar day permit problem. Rep. Brown stated that there were two solutions, to correct the rule administratively or let the legislature correct the problem during session. Rep. Brown added that he would prefer the parties involved work together to come to a solution. Rep. Brown then warned that if the legislature handled the issue, nothing was safe. Rep. Brown noted that the legislature

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

could mess up corn flakes.

Sen. Zakas recommended that the Commission consider a draft to legislatively correct the problem. Rep. Brown said that the issue of the calendar day permit would be one draft of several that would be considered.

Rep. Brown then recognized John Weaver of the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). Mr. Weaver reviewed and discussed the letter sent to the Commission by Cristine Klicka, Commissioner of INDOT (see Exhibit A). The Commission discussed the letter.

Rep. Fesko asked if the Michigan train corridor could handle an increased maximum weight of 164,000 pounds. Mr. Weaver noted that 15 bridges are deficient, and that the current traffic is deteriorating the roads.

Rep. Brown asked what dollar amount would be required to bring Indiana Michigan train roads up to safe standards. Mr. Weaver noted that Commissioner Klicka's letter estimated the amount to be \$76 million dollars. Mr. Weaver added that even if the money was immediately available, the fix would not be easy. Mr. Weaver estimated that it would take up to eight years to complete the project.

The Commission discussed road damage to the Michigan train corridor. Mr. Weaver informed the Commission that the damage to the road by trucks weighing 164,000 pounds is twice the damage that is done by trucks weighing 134,000 pounds.

Rep. Brown asked whether the Michigan train permit fees collected cover the amount of damages. Sen. Zakas asked whether the Michigan train permit fees are earmarked for repairing the Michigan train corridor. Mr. Poe said the fees are not earmarked for the particular corridor, and Mr. Weaver stated the amount of the fees would not cover repair and maintenance of the corridor.

Rep. Fesko asked if the bridges are safe for current use. Mr. Weaver stated that the bridges are safe. The Commission discussed bridge safety.

Rep. Brown asked that all parties involved in the Michigan train issue meet to work out a solution. Rep. Brown suggested that the parties reach a solution prior to the next meeting of the Commission, and that INDOT should take the lead in making the meeting happen.

Rep. Mock asked about other overweight permits and the fees from the permits. Mr. Poe explained the types of overweight and oversize permits offered and the fees involved. The Commission discussed overweight and oversize permits.

Rep. Mock asked about other truckers wanting increased weights if Michigan train weight is increased. Mr. Weaver agreed that there is a national movement to increase all truck weights. The Commission discussed increased truck weights.

Sen. Zakas stated that he would like for INDOT to look at the prospects of multiple axles as a solution.

Rep. Stevenson asked about the possibility of an extra heavy duty highway leading into Illinois. The Commission discussed the Illinois and Chicago proposal on extra heavy duty highways, and the engineering problems in making existing Indiana highways connect with the proposed Illinois route.

Rep. Brown called for other testimony on Michigan trains and recognized Lesly Lis, a union member and truck driver. Mr. Lis stated that trucks did not need any additional weight added to their truck loads, and that the current weight allowed by law was heavy enough. Mr. Lis expressed his opinion of corporate America and of the steel mills. Mr. Lis recommended that government reregulate industry so that truck drivers can make a living wage.

Rep. Brown recognized Col. Dean Petree of the Indiana State Police. Col. Petree provided follow-up information concerning discussion at a prior Commission meeting on Motor Carrier Officers pulling valid extra heavy duty permits of trucks violating other motor vehicle laws. Col. Petree stated that it is not the policy of the Indiana State Police to pull a valid extra heavy duty permit and revert to an 80,000 maximum legal load if the truck commits a vehicle violation. Col. Petree informed the Commission that the claims by truck driver Jack Bos at the September 9, 1999, meeting were false. Col. Petree reiterated that safety is the primary concern of the Indiana State Police.

Rep. Brown recognized Clarence Ehlers of National Steel. Mr. Ehlers provided a clarification of the damage done to roads by 5 axles as opposed to 11 axles, discussed Michigan's highways, and talked about axle weights on the Indiana toll road.

At this point Rep. Brown announced the discussion of Michigan trains would resume at a later date, and that the Commission would now discuss high speed rail.

Rep. Brown recognized Roger Sims of the Indiana High Speed Rail Association. Mr. Sims discussed high speed rail using a series of slides (see Exhibit B for the text of the slides). The Commission discussed high speed rail.

Rep. Brown recognized Larry Good, Intermodal Division Chief of INDOT. Mr. Good discussed high speed rail using a series of slides (see Exhibit C for the text of the slides). The Commission discussed high speed rail, and funding for high speed rail.

Rep. Brown recognized Sen. Sue Landske. Sen. Landske discussed the Midwest Highspeed Rail Initiative and presented the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact (see Exhibit D) and a proposed resolution to the Commission. Sen. Landske discussed the High Speed Rail Task Force and provided an overview of the Task Force's meetings with representatives of various unions.

Rep. Brown announced that the next Commission meetings would be October 21, 1999, at 1:00 p.m. and October 27, 1999, at 10:00 a.m.

Rep. Brown adjourned the meeting.